



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 5105

February Session, 2000

An Act Implementing The Recommendations Of The Blue Ribbon Commission To Study Affordable Housing Regarding Funding For Programs That Address Housing Needs.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (d) of section 17b-812 of the general statutes is
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

3 (d) The commissioner shall administer the program under this
4 section to promote housing choice for certificate holders and
5 encourage racial and economic integration. The commissioner shall
6 establish maximum rent levels for each municipality in a manner that
7 promotes the use of the program in all municipalities, but in no event
8 shall the commissioner establish a maximum rent level which is less
9 than the fair market rent established by the United States Department
10 of Housing and Urban Development for the Section 8 certificate
11 program. Any certificate issued pursuant to this section may be used
12 for housing in any municipality in the state. The commissioner shall
13 inform certificate holders that a certificate may be used in any
14 municipality and, to the extent practicable, the commissioner shall
15 assist certificate holders in finding housing in the municipality of their
16 choice.

17 Sec. 2. (NEW) (a) As used in this section, "eligible households"
18 means persons and families whose income is less than or equal to fifty

19 per cent of the area median income and who also meet one or more of
20 the following criteria:

21 (1) Households with housing cost burdens in excess of fifty per cent
22 of household income;

23 (2) Households that are homeless or are at risk of homelessness;

24 (3) Disabled persons, which, for purposes of this subdivision, means
25 persons over eighteen years of age who are receiving disability
26 payments pursuant to either Title 2 or Title 16 of the Social Security
27 Act of 1935, as amended, or are receiving payments pursuant to section
28 17b-78 of the general statutes under the state-administered general
29 assistance program or the general assistance program as unemployable
30 or transitional individuals, as defined in section 17b-689 of the general
31 statutes, or are receiving payments as an incapacitated caretaker
32 pursuant to section 17b-112 of the general statutes, as amended by
33 section 8 of public act 99-279, under the aid to families with dependent
34 children program or under the temporary family assistance program,
35 or are eligible for medical assistance as a disabled person pursuant to
36 Title 19 of the Social Security Act of 1935, as amended;

37 (4) Victims of domestic violence;

38 (5) Families with lead-exposed children;

39 (6) Families participating in Project CHOICE programs;

40 (7) Persons residing in emergency shelters or transitional living
41 programs;

42 (8) Persons who have other severe housing needs as determined by
43 the Commissioner of Social Services;

44 (9) Persons receiving benefits under the state medical assistance
45 program pursuant to section 17b-257 of the general statutes, or the
46 general assistance medical assistance program pursuant to section 17b-
47 78 of the general statutes.

48 (b) The Commissioner of Social Services shall implement and
49 administer Housing Plus, a program of rental assistance and support
50 services to eligible households, through grants-in-aid to eligible
51 nonprofit corporations.

52 (c) The commissioner shall establish a review panel to evaluate
53 applications and make recommendations to the commissioner for
54 awards of grants-in-aid to eligible nonprofit corporations pursuant to
55 this program. The review panel shall include, but not be limited to, no
56 less than three representatives of eligible households and no less than
57 three representatives of providers of services to eligible households. In
58 evaluating applications and awarding grants-in-aid, the review panel
59 and the commissioner shall consider all criteria appropriate to carrying
60 out the purposes of this program, including, but not limited to:

61 (1) The experience of the applicant in providing housing or support
62 services to eligible households;

63 (2) The organizational capacity of the applicant or evidence of
64 collaborative relationships entered into by the applicant to administer
65 rental assistance and deliver support services;

66 (3) The plan of services for the categories for eligible households the
67 applicant intends to serve;

68 (4) Among all the selected grantees, the extent to which rental
69 assistance and support services provided through the grants-in-aid
70 under this program will be available to all areas of the state; and

71 (5) The extent to which different categories of eligible households
72 will be served through the grants-in-aid awarded under this program.

73 (d) Housing obtained under this program shall be in compliance
74 with applicable state and local health, housing, building and safety
75 codes.

76 (e) The commissioner shall set maximum rent levels for this
77 program, which shall be no less than the rent levels established by the

78 United States Department of Housing and Urban Development under
79 the Section 8 certificate program. Rental assistance provided under this
80 program shall be calculated so that no household will pay more than
81 thirty per cent of household income, adjusted for allowable household
82 expenses, for the contribution of household rent. The commissioner
83 shall establish maximum rent levels for this program in each
84 municipality in a manner that promotes the use of the program in all
85 municipalities. The commissioner shall administer the program under
86 this section to promote housing choice for certificate holders and
87 encourage racial and economic integration and integration of disabled
88 persons.

89 (f) Services provided under this program are nonclinical services
90 that support the eligible household's ability to achieve and sustain
91 housing stability. Such services may include, but are not limited to,
92 case management services that will link clients to available services in
93 the community, including health and behavioral health services,
94 housing mobility counseling, training in independent living skills and
95 tenant responsibilities, peer mentoring and peer counseling, crisis
96 intervention, conflict resolution and mediation, employment training
97 and education, and employment counseling job retention supports.

98 (g) No grant-in-aid to an individual nonprofit corporation shall
99 exceed five hundred thousand dollars annually. Such grant-in-aid shall
100 include reasonable administrative costs.

101 (h) The Commissioner of Social Services shall implement the
102 policies and procedures necessary to carry out the provisions of
103 subsections (a) to (g), inclusive, of this section while in the process of
104 adopting such policies and procedures in regulation form, provided
105 notice of intent to adopt the regulations is published in the Connecticut
106 Law Journal within twenty days after implementation. Such policies
107 and procedures shall be valid until the time final regulations are
108 effective.

109 (i) The commissioner shall conduct an evaluation of Housing Plus

110 no later than December 31, 2001, to measure the success of clients of
111 the program in maintaining housing, the success of such clients in
112 following individual case management plans, the number of
113 households and the number of individuals served under the program
114 and the experience of landlords who rent apartments to the clients.

115 Sec. 3. (NEW) The Department of Social Services shall establish a
116 Beyond Shelter program to provide grants-in-aid to nonprofit
117 organizations to provide follow-up and support services for up to one
118 year for persons who are leaving emergency shelters for the homeless
119 and transitional living programs.

120 Sec. 4. (NEW) (a) As used in this section:

121 (1) "Eligible households" means persons or families affected by
122 psychiatric disabilities or chemical dependency, or both, and who are
123 homeless or at risk of homelessness; and

124 (2) "Homeless or at risk of homelessness" means (A) living on the
125 streets or in shelters, (B) coming out of homeless programs or
126 transitional housing and having no permanent housing, (C) living in
127 unsafe or abusive environments, (D) paying more than fifty per cent of
128 income for rent, (E) living in overcrowded conditions, or (F) being in
129 need of supportive services in order to maintain permanent housing.

130 (b) The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services shall
131 implement and administer a program to provide grants-in-aid to
132 nonprofit corporations for the purpose of providing support services
133 to eligible households. Such services shall be designed to enable
134 residents of eligible households to (1) obtain and keep permanent
135 housing, (2) increase their job skills and income, and (3) achieve
136 greater self-determination.

137 (c) The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services shall
138 leverage funding from other state agencies and from private, federal
139 and local funding sources to fund support services under this act.

140 Sec. 5. Subsection (f) of section 12-217p of the general statutes is
141 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

142 (f) Any business firm which desires to apply for the credit allowed
143 by this section shall submit the documentation required under
144 subsection (d) of this section to the authority on or before November
145 first of each year. The authority shall randomly select from among all
146 qualified business firms, those firms allowed said credit. The credit
147 shall be claimed on the tax return for the income year during which the
148 selected business firm made payment into the revolving loan fund. The
149 sum of all tax credit granted pursuant to the provisions of this section
150 shall not exceed [one] two hundred thousand dollars annually per
151 business firm. In no event shall the total amount of all tax credits
152 allowed to all business firms pursuant to the provisions of this section
153 exceed [one] two million dollars in any one fiscal year.

154 Sec. 6. The appropriation from the General Fund to the Department
155 of Social Services, for Housing/Homeless Services, for the fiscal year
156 ending June 30, 2001, shall be increased by ten million dollars for
157 purposes of the rental assistance program.

158 Sec. 7. The appropriation from the General Fund to the Department
159 of Social Services, for Housing/Homeless Services, for the fiscal year
160 ending June 30, 2002, shall be increased by twenty million dollars for
161 purposes of the rental assistance program.

162 Sec. 8. The appropriation from the General Fund to the Department
163 of Social Services, for Housing/Homeless Services, for the fiscal year
164 ending June 30, 2003, shall be increased by thirty million dollars for
165 purposes of the rental assistance program.

166 Sec. 9. The sum of ten million dollars is appropriated from the
167 General Fund to the Department of Social Services for the fiscal year
168 ending June 30, 2001, and the sum of ten million dollars is
169 appropriated to the Department of Social Services for the fiscal year
170 ending June 30, 2002, to implement the Housing Plus program created
171 pursuant to section 2 of this act.

172 Sec. 10. The sum of one million dollars is appropriated from the
173 General Fund to the Department of Social Services for the fiscal year
174 ending June 30, 2001, to fund the grants-in-aid for the transitional
175 services program authorized in section 3 of this act.

176 Sec. 11. The sum of two million dollars is appropriated from the
177 General Fund to the Department of Mental Health and Addiction
178 Services for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2001, for the supportive
179 housing program established under section 4 of this act.

180 Sec. 12. The sum of one million nine hundred fifty thousand dollars
181 is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Economic
182 and Community Development for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2001,
183 to increase funding for community-based planning, homeownership
184 counseling programs, and to fund capacity building for nonprofit
185 developers.

186 Sec. 13. The sum of two million three hundred thousand dollars is
187 appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Social
188 Services for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2001, to increase the funding
189 for landlord-tenant mediation services and for the rent bank program.

190 Sec. 14. This act shall take effect July 1, 2000.

HSG Committee Vote: Yea 11 Nay 0 JFS C/R PD